

## Warren County Board of Supervisors

**Committee:**           **Social Services**

**Date:**                   **November 28, 2012**

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**Committee Members Present:**

Supervisors   Loeb  
                  Kenny  
                  Strainer  
                  Wood  
                  Sokol  
                  Westcott

**Committee Member Absent:**

Supervisor   Bentley

**Others Present:**

Representing the Department of Social Services:  
                  Suzanne Wheeler, Acting Commissioner  
                  Julie Montero, Fiscal Manager  
Deanna Park, Director, Countryside Adult Home  
Daniel G. Stec, Chairman of the Board  
Paul Dusek, County Administrator  
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board  
Kevin Geraghty, Budget Officer  
Supervisors   Conover  
                          Dickinson  
                          Mason  
                          Merlino  
                          Taylor  
                          Thomas  
                          Vanselow  
John Strough, Queensbury Town Councilman  
Don Lehman, *The Post Star*  
Nicole Livingston, Second Deputy Clerk

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Mr. Loeb called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 10:02 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Deanna Park, Director of Countryside Adult Home, who distributed copies of her agenda to the Committee members; a copy of the agenda is also on file with the minutes.

Commencing the Action Agenda review, Ms. Park presented a request to terminate the Performance Assurance Technical Support aspect of the Siemens contract. She explained that this was the Performance Report that was provided to Countryside Adult Home each year; however, she noted, the reports did not give the "actual" savings, but rather the "stipulated" savings and by eliminating this portion of the contract with Siemens, an approximate savings of \$4,931 a year could be realized.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 21, 2012 Board meeting. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Ms. Park pointed out Item 1 under the Topics for Discussion was the Overtime Report which reflected 199 hours for the past pay cycle and included the Veterans' Day Holiday, which was a decrease of 93.3 hours overall from last year's figures.

Ms. Park informed the current census at the facility was 40 residents, 15 men and 25 women. She reviewed the monthly statistics as follows: 10 referrals; 3 admissions; 6 discharges; and 1 new referral for Day Care.

The next item on the Agenda, Ms. Park stated, was a request to admit individuals while they were pending approval for Temporary Assistance. Ms. Park referred to the spreadsheet in the Agenda which detailed the wait period for Temporary Assistance approval, which currently was one to two months. She added that due to the delay, some individuals chose to go to other facilities during that time and it had also decreased the number of referrals from the Hospital because it took too long to get an individual in and generally, when they were at the Hospital, they needed placement right away.

Mr. Sokol entered the meeting at 10:06 a.m.

Mr. Strainer expressed his concern that individuals could be admitted and subsequently not approved for Temporary Assistance, and if they had no means to pay then the County would be responsible for those costs. Ms. Park acknowledged the risk, but noted that had rarely occurred in the past. She asserted that since 2005, they have had two individuals that had been admitted and subsequently determined to be ineligible for assistance, resulting in a loss to the County of approximately \$40,000 between the two of them. Mr. Strainer questioned if it was possible to determine whether or not an individual would be eligible for assistance prior to admittance. Ms. Park explained that she did meet with the individual to determine if they were able to pay privately or if they would need to apply for Temporary Assistance. If they required Temporary Assistance, she continued, she helped them complete the application and collect all the necessary documentation to submit to the County.

Ms. Park apprised that if the Committee approved this request, it would allow individuals to be admitted while their applications for Temporary Assistance were being processed and once approved, the assistance would be retroactive to their admittance date. She opined that the County was losing money while waiting for the approval of Temporary Assistance.

Paul Dusek, County Administrator, remarked that he felt this was a good idea and although there was a risk involved, he agreed with Ms. Park that it would be more beneficial to the County to secure a resident at the facility rather than losing the money while awaiting approval for Temporary Assistance. He referenced the history of only two people being admitted that did not qualify for assistance, which was impressive.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 21, 2012 Board meeting. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Concluding the Agenda, Ms. Park stated there was a request from the Budget Committee for review of the Countryside Adult Home Financial Analysis. Mr. Dusek distributed an updated Five Year Fiscal Analysis of Countryside Adult Home to the Committee members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Dusek advised there had not been any significant changes since the first analysis was performed two years ago, noting the facility continued to cost the County money. He mentioned that the 2011 figures actually came in below the original projections in the report; they had predicted a loss in 2011 of over \$500,000 and it had come in at a \$379,489 loss. He said that going forward, he believed the loss would increase over \$500,000.

Mr. Kenny recalled that the County had brought in a private company to look at the facility a few years ago and the company had informed that they could operate the facility at a profit with the same number of employees and a total budget for salaries of \$300,000, as compared to the County's cost for salaries of \$1.2 million. He pointed out that the cost to the County in 2013 would be \$556,024 for 40 residents. Mr. Kenny stated the County could not continue to provide such a service to the people and he expressed his opinion that the County should close the facility, which he believed would take approximately eighteen months to accomplish. Mr. Dusek interjected that the time frame could vary depending upon governmental approvals, as well as placement of current residents in new locations, which the County would be responsible for.

Mr. Westcott supported Mr. Kenny's suggestion, given that funding the facility was not sustainable particularly in light of the budget projections. In response to an inquiry, Ms. Park informed there were currently 28 employees at the facility and the Meal Site was now located there, as well.

Chairman Stec entered the meeting at 10:26 a.m.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Dusek expounded that depending on the outcome of the close out, there would most likely be minimal savings the first year, which over time should grow to at least a \$250,000 savings a year. If the decision was made to sell the building, he opined it would be a difficult sell due to the location; however, he said, there was no money owed on the building. Mr. Dusek acknowledged the request by Committee members for copies of the full report that was prepared two years ago. Mr. Loeb stated that following receipt of the report, the Committee could re-visit the topic next month.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Suzanne Wheeler, Acting Commissioner of the Department of Social Services (DSS), who distributed copies of her agenda to the Committee members; a copy of the agenda is also on file with the minutes.

Under the Announcements portion of the Agenda, Ms. Wheeler apprised the Team Player for the month of November was Christina Mastrianni, Foster Care Caseworker, who was unable to attend the meeting today. She noted that the Agenda included praising comments from Ms. Mastriannis' co-workers.

Ms. Wheeler remarked the first request under the Action Items portion of the Agenda, was for Ms. Mastrianni to enroll in two job related courses at Sage Graduate School entitled "Family Law" and "Substance Abuse: Vulnerabilities, Prevention & Treatment", both commencing January 22, 2013 and completing May 13, 2013 and each at a cost of \$1,980.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the requests to enroll in job related courses as outlined above, and to refer the same to the Personnel Committee. Copies of the resolution request forms are on file with the minutes.

Ms. Wheeler presented a request for a transfer of funds in the amount of \$500,000 to cover benefit and contract costs. She explained that by transferring the funds to different codes, the Department would receive better reimbursements.

Motion was made by Mrs. Wood, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the request for a transfer of funds as outlined above, and to refer same to the Finance Committee. A copy of the request for Transfer of Funds is on file with the minutes.

Ms. Wheeler stated the Budget Analysis was included in the Agenda for the Committee's review, noting that revenues were coming in. Julie Montero, Fiscal Manager, added that some of the claims that had been closed were finally open this month and payments for such would be reflected next month. Ms. Wheeler remarked the Overtime Analysis was also included in the Agenda and usage continued to be less for 2012 than 2011.

Mr. Loeb announced an executive session was needed to discuss the appointment of a particular individual. Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously that executive session be declared pursuant to Section 105 (f) of the Public Officers Law.

Executive session was declared from 10:43 a.m. to 10:49 a.m.

The Committee reconvened. Pursuant to the executive session, motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Westcott and carried unanimously to appoint Suzanne Wheeler as Commissioner of Social Services, annual salary of \$80,000, with four weeks of vacation, and to refer the same to the Personnel Committee.

There being no further business to come before the Social Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strainer and seconded by Mrs. Wood, Mr. Loeb adjourned the meeting at 10:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Livingston, Second Deputy Clerk